

Loquats & feijoas

Queensland fruit fly's best friends



Loquats and feijoas ripen at the perfect times for Queensland fruit fly in the Sunraysia region, book ending the season.

Adult fruit flies that have survived winter look to mate and lay eggs once the weather warms up. As one of the first fruits to ripen in spring, loquats provide this opportunity.

Feijoas on the other hand are one of the last fruits to ripen in late autumn, providing flies with an opportunity to produce one more generation before winter arrives.

Removing or managing both of these varieties can have a big impact on fruit fly pressure.

Loquats

Loquats are a species of flowering plants called Japanese medlar, originally from China.

Classified as subtropical fruit, it is oval shaped, plum sized and golden yellow in colour.

Flies become active in mid-August and will mate when the temperature at dusk reaches 16°C, laying eggs into any available fruit.

Loquats generally ripen when little other fruit is available and can be a main source of early infestations.

At a glance

Loquats and feijoas fruit at ideal times, helping to start the fruit fly season in spring and maintain strong populations heading into winter

Remove loquat and feijoa trees that you do not need or are too large to manage

Pick all the fruit every year

Collect and dispose of any fruit on the ground as soon as possible

Prune tree to a manageable height

Fact sheet: Loquats & feijoas

Loquats are evergreen with dark green foliage and can provide plenty of shade. They can also grow quite large.

If you want to keep your tree but don't use the fruit, you can strip the fruit before it ripens. This will prevent flies from infesting the fruit.

Feijoas

The feijoa (*feijoa sellowiana*) is native to southern Brazil and northern Argentina. It is part of the myrtle family.

Feijoas produce egg-sized green fruit in late autumn when there is little other fruit available for Qfly to lay eggs into.

This late season fruit helps the flies breed up with strong numbers heading into winter.

During winter, adult flies slow down their metabolism and can survive for several months. In the warmer months when they are active, they may only survive for four to six weeks. Restricting their numbers at the start of winter provides a better chance of controlling populations the following season.

Feijoas are evergreen trees and can provide plenty of shade in summer. They also have beautiful pink flowers in spring.

Fruit generally falls off the tree when ripe. But fruit also drops to the ground when infested with Qfly, which allows the larvae to go into the soil and develop into adults.

Option 1: Remove feijoa and loquat trees

If you do not use the fruit or the tree is too large for you to manage, consider removing the tree from your garden.

Option 2: Remove fruit but keep the tree

If you want to keep your tree but don't use the fruit, you can still help in the fight against Qfly.

The easiest way is to strip the tree of all fruit before it ripens, when it is as small as possible. This will prevent flies from infesting the fruit.

You will need to pick all of the fruit every year. You may also need to prune the tree to a manageable height to ensure you can reach all the fruit.

Option 3: Manage trees

If you have the time to prevent Qfly infestation, you can be rewarded with beautiful fruit.

Qfly control actions work best when used in combination.

Actions can include managing the height of the tree, covering trees with insect exclusion netting, applying bait sprays, and using traps and lures. Most importantly, make sure you pick all of the fruit.

